

Asbury Theological Seminary ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange

Syllabi

eCommons

1-1-2004

NT 641 Exegesis of Hebrews

Ruth Anne Reese

Follow this and additional works at: <http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Reese, Ruth Anne, "NT 641 Exegesis of Hebrews" (2004). *Syllabi*. Book 2491.
<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/2491>

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.

NT 641 Exegesis of Hebrews
Preliminary Syllabus: Subject to Revision

Ruth Anne Reese, Ph.D.
Office FM 109
ruthanne_reese@asburyseminary.edu

Spring 2004
3 semester units
x. 2184

Description: A close reading of Hebrews with special attention given to literary, socio-historical, and theological understandings of the epistle.

Prerequisites: NT 500 or 501/502; NT 510 or 511, NT 520.

Objectives: By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Employ a range of exegetical approaches relevant to the interpretation of Hebrews, and to apply those approaches to other NT books of similar genre;
- Understand Hebrews within its socio-historical, literary, and canonical contexts;
- Identify central issues in the critical study of Hebrews;
- Articulate the importance of one's own presuppositions in the task of interpretation;
- Articulate primary theological and ethical concerns of Hebrews;
- Demonstrate awareness of how the theological and ethical concerns of Hebrews contribute to those of the canon and of constructive theology and ethics;
- Differentiate between critical and homiletic/devotional commentaries and studies of Hebrews and other NT books; and
- Evaluate critically the usefulness of secondary literature in the study of Hebrews.

Concise Greek Students should be able to:

- Use Greek-based language tools to demonstrate proficiency in lexical semantics;
- Use Greek-based language tools to identify grammatical constructions (i.e, with regard to sentence structure and use of clauses);
- Use Greek-based language tools to engage in syntactical analyses (i.e, with regard to verbal aspect, mood, and voice; use of the genitive and dative cases).

Course Requirements and Reading:

- Class preparation, attendance, and participation (20%): Students should prepare for each class by (1) carefully reading the assigned texts, (2) making their own notes on the text, and (3) comparing their observations with those made in one of the required commentaries below. The participation grade will include presence, engagement, introductory work (see below), and participation assignment work.
- Interpretive Assignment (3 x 10% = 30 %): You may do an interpretive assignment on any passage from chapters 3-13 of Hebrews. These are due at the beginning of the class period. Interpretive assignments are not accepted late.

You may do as many of these as there are opportunities, and I will count the three highest grades. For more on Interpretive Assignments, see my folder on the Intranet.

- Commentary Review (20%): Write a critical review comparing and contrasting at least two of the required commentaries below. General guidelines on book reviews are available in my folder on the Intranet.
- Theological Research Paper or Project (30%): On 1 class session prepare in advance a paper of approximately 8 double spaced pages (i.e., approx. 2,000 words) showing *either* how the theology of a particular aspect of the book of Hebrews contributes to the canon *or* how a chapter or pericope within the book contributes to the overall theology of the epistle itself. Students who choose to complete this assignment in groups of two or three (turning in one assignment for the group) will raise their grade by one later grade (e.g., from B to B+). Students desiring suggestions and comments prior to final submission of their assignment may submit a penultimate draft no later than April 15.

Required Reading:

Greek New Testament (Nestle-Aland for comprehensive students or an interlinear for concise students).

DeSilva, David. *Despising Shame: The Social Function of the Rhetoric of Honor and Shame in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996.

Lindars, Barnabas. *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*. New Testament Theology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Required: Purchase One

Attridge, Harold W. *Hebrews*. Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989.

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

DeSilva, David. *Preserverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Lane, William L. *Hebrews 1-8*. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, 1991.

—. *Hebrews 9-13*. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, 1991.

Recommended Reading:

Guthrie, George H. *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.

Instructions for Assignments and Grading Criteria

Attendance:

Attendance is expected and will be recorded. It is the students' responsibility to make sure that they record their attendance in class. The professor will not record

attendance at a later time. Students who miss more than 3 class sessions will not be eligible for a passing grade.

Grading:

Asbury Seminary defines grades using the following criteria (catalog, p. 24):

A= Exceptional work: outstanding or surpassing achievement of course objectives

B= Good work: substantial achievement of course objectives

C= Acceptable work: essential achievement of course objectives

D= Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives

F= Unacceptable work: failure of course work

A plus (+) or minus (-) indicates positions between categories (for example, B+ = very good; C- = slightly below acceptable, etc.).

Work that is turned in late will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade per day late. For example, B paper becomes B- paper if it is one day late. All late papers must be turned into the biblical studies secretary or handed directly to me. Do not put late papers under my door or they will be marked as received on the day when I return to my office.

Participation: Attendance (i.e., presence) will be part of the participation grade; engagement with other members of the class will be part of the participation grade. Each student will be expected to turn in a page of material for the week showing their class preparation. Each student will be expected to introduce the class to the issues in one of the chapters or pericopes. These elements will factor into the participation grade.

Interpretive Assignments: On three of the seven interpretive assignment days the student will prepare a close reading of the passage under discussion. This should be between 750-1,000 words (3-4 pages), typed, double spaced. It is due at the beginning of class. Interpretive assignments will not be accepted after class. For more information on interpretive assignments see the file in the course folder on the Intranet.

Commentary Review: The commentary review should compare and contrast at least two of the required commentaries. You should be able to articulate the main goals of the commentator and whether or not these have been achieved. You should also be able to articulate differences based on audience and space. This is similar to a book review but involves more than one book. For details on book reviews see my folder on the Intranet. This assignment should be between 1,000 – 1,500 words (4-6 pages), typed, double spaced.

Theological Assignment: The theological assignment shows *either* how a particular aspect of theology within the epistle to the Hebrews contributes to the canon *or* how a chapter or pericope within the book contributes to the overall theology of the epistle itself. This assignment should demonstrate both sound exegesis and interpretation of either a passage within a given epistle or a broad understanding of the whole of a given epistle and the relationship between the exegetical work and the theological significance of the material at hand. The paper is expected to contain properly cited references and any outside resources needed.

Project

If you would like to turn in the theological assignment in some other form besides that of a paper, please talk to me about what you would like to do and how we can go about doing that.

Course Schedule

Feb 10

Introduction

IBS and Exegesis: The Meeting of 2 Methods

Using Greek in Interpretation: Things to Notice

Reading: Read the book of Hebrews at least 3 times; begin reading DeSilva; begin reading the introduction from one of the required commentaries.

Class Preparation for Feb 16: Prepare a broad outline of the book of Hebrews. Next to each break, indicate why you have chosen to place a break in that place. Do not consult commentaries or other reference works for this assignment.

Feb 16

Approaches to Interpretation

Theological Approaches to Hebrews

Hebrews as a Whole: Outline and Context

Reading: Continue reading DeSilva; finish reading the introduction from one of the required commentaries.

Class Preparation for Feb 23: Carefully read Hebrews 1 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. Try to summarize the main point of chapter 1 in a single sentence. Make a short list of 2-4 questions or points of interest that arise for you from the chapter. AFTER you have done the 3 things above, read the section on chapter 1 in at least one of the required commentaries. Add any questions or comments arising from your commentary reading to your list of questions/comments.

Feb 23

Hebrews 1

Exploring words, structure, and sentences

The use of the Old Testament

Exploring context

Reading: Continue reading DeSilva; begin reading the introduction from a second required commentary.

Class Preparation for Mar 2: Carefully read Hebrews 2 and 3 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. In one sentence, try to explain the relationship between the end of chapter 1 and the beginning of chapter 2. What differences do you see between chapter 1 and chapter 2? Make a note of these. How does chapter 2 connect to chapter 3? What pericopes help define this unit? AFTER you have done these things, read the section on chapters 2 and 3 in one of the required commentaries. Add any questions or comments arising from your commentary reading to your notes.

Mar 2

Hebrews 2 and 3

Exploring themes

Reading: Finish reading DeSilva; finish reading the introduction from a second required commentary.

Class Preparation for Mar 9: Carefully read Hebrews 4 and 5 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. In one sentence, try to explain the relationship between the end of chapter 3 and the beginning of chapter 4. Do you see any places where different translations may affect the meaning and/or implications of the text? Make a note of these. How does chapter 4 connect to chapter 5? What pericopes help define this unit? What questions or comments arise from this chapter? AFTER you have done these things, read the section on chapters 4 and 5 in one of the required commentaries. Add any questions or comments arising from your commentary reading to your notes.

Due: Interpretive Assignment # 1 – a pericope of your choosing from Hebrews 2-3. Interpretive Assignments are to be completed prior to consulting a commentary or other secondary sources.

Mar 9

Hebrews 4 and 5

Jewish background to the epistle of Hebrews

Reading: Begin reading Lindars

Class Preparation for Mar 16: Carefully read Hebrews 6 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. How does the beginning of this chapter relate to the end of the chapter? What kind of markers help you determine the relationship? AFTER answering these questions, consult one of the required commentaries on chapter 6. Add any questions or comments arising from your commentary reading to your notes.

Due: 1 page (250 word) summary of DeSilva; Interpretive Assignment # 2 – a pericope of your choosing from Hebrews 4-5. Interpretive Assignments are to be completed prior to consulting a commentary or other secondary sources.

Mar 16

Discussion of DeSilva's book and cultural context

Hebrews 6

Reading: Continue reading Lindars

Class Preparation for Mar 23: Read Genesis 14: 17-24 and Psalm 110. If you can, read Genesis and the Psalm in the LXX. Carefully read Hebrews 7-10 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. Make a note of all the comparisons and contrasts in this section. Be especially careful to note the $\mu\epsilon\nu / \delta\epsilon$ formula as it occurs. What does the author of Hebrews indicate about the *way* he interprets the OT. AFTER working with these topics begin to read one of the required commentaries on chapters 7-10. Add any questions or comments arising from your commentary reading to your notes.

Due: Commentary Review; Interpretive Assignment # 3 – a pericope of your choosing from Hebrews 6

Mar 23

Hebrews 7

Reading: Finish reading Lindars

Class Preparation for Apr 6: Read Exodus 19 and Jeremiah 31. If you can, read Exodus and Jeremiah in the LXX. Carefully read Hebrews 7-10 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. How have Exodus 10 and Jeremiah 31 been reinterpreted for the book of Hebrews? AFTER working with this topic begin to read one of the required commentaries on chapters 7-10. Add any questions or comments arising from your commentary reading to your notes.

Due: Interpretive Assignment # 4 – a pericope of your choosing from Hebrews 7-8

Apr 6

Discussion of Lindars and Theology
Hebrews 8

Class Preparation for Apr 13: Read Exodus 25-26 and Leviticus 16. If you can, read Exodus and Leviticus in the LXX. Carefully read Hebrews 7-10 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. How have Exodus 25-26 and Leviticus 16 been reinterpreted for the book of Hebrews? AFTER working with this topic begin to read one of the required commentaries on chapters 7-10.

Due: 1 page (250 word) summary of Lindars

Apr 13

Hebrews 9
Reading: Begin reading for your research paper.

Class Preparation for Apr 20: Read Psalm 40 and Habakkuk 2. Reread Psalm 110. Carefully read Hebrews 7-10 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. How have the Psalms and Habakkuk been reinterpreted for the book of Hebrews? AFTER working with this topic begin to read one of the required commentaries on chapters 7-10. Add any questions or comments arising from your commentary reading to your notes.

Due: Interpretive Assignment #5 – a pericope of your choosing from Hebrews 9.

Apr 20

Hebrews 10
Reading: Continue reading for your research paper

Class Preparation for Apr 27: Carefully read Hebrews 11 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. How does chapter 11 relate to the chapters that come before? What are the most difficult verses for you to understand in this chapter? What words might bear careful attention in this chapter? What purpose does the repetition in this chapter serve? AFTER working with these topics read one of the required commentaries on chapter 11. Add any questions or comments arising from your commentary reading to your notes.

Due: Interpretive Assignment #6 – a pericope of your choosing from Hebrews 10

Apr 27

Hebrews 11
Reading: Continue reading for your research paper

Class Preparation for May 4: Read Proverbs 3; if you can, read it in the LXX. Reread Exodus 19. Carefully read Hebrews 12 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. How do the parts of chapter 12 relate to each other? What is the flow of the argument? AFTER working with these questions, consult one of the required commentaries on chapter 12.

May 4

Hebrews 12

Teaching, Preaching, and Counseling from Hebrews

Reading: Continue reading for your research paper

Class Preparation for May 11: Carefully read Hebrews 13 in a Greek or in an interlinear Greek version. What is the main point of this chapter? How does it affect our understanding of the whole book? AFTER working with these questions, consult one of the required commentaries on chapter 13.

Due: Interpretive Assignment #7 – a pericope of your choosing from Hebrews 12-13

May 11

Hebrews 13

Teaching, Preaching, and Counseling from Hebrews

Directions for further study

May 17-20 FINALS WEEK. Final papers/projects are due May 20 at 4 pm. I will be away at a grant meeting during finals week and will return Thursday afternoon. Please address all questions to me prior to the beginning of finals week.